

Laredo College is one of only ten nationwide to get \$1M donation from TikTok

Laredo College was selected as the only community college nationwide, the only institution of higher education in Texas and one of only ten recipients nationwide to receive a generous gift from popular short-form video platform TikTok that will be geared toward improving healthcare in South Texas.

LC received \$1 million for scholarships, academic and faculty support, recruitment and equipment. This generous gift will be crucial to the innovation and advancement in healthcare and technology needed to respond to the global challenges posed by the pandemic.

"We feel honored to have been selected for this generous gift," Laredo College President Dr. Ricardo J. Solis said. "This partnership will help hundreds of students pursue their educational goals in health sciences and make an immediate, extraordinary impact in our community as we continue innovating and being a leader in education across the nation. TikTok has selected Laredo College as the sole community college recipient amongst an extensive pool of colleges and universities nationwide. I believe that this is due to our leadership, innovation and excellence."

The popular platform has been supporting frontline medical workers, educators and local communities around the world by establishing relief funds. In their efforts to support educational entities in the United States, they evaluated higher education institutions to be the recipients of these funds. In addition to their evaluation of institutional performance, and various interviews held with Dr. Solis and other LC administrators, TikTok also reached out to members of Congress for their input. Congressman Henry Cuellar's support of Laredo College was pivotal in their selection for this prestigious award.

"To be only one of ten schools nationwide to receive this \$1 million gift, shows just how impactful Laredo College is on their students, faculty and staff," said Congressman Cuellar. "While our communities battle an unprecedented pandemic, we look to institutions like Laredo College to sharpen the minds of our future health professionals through advanced health sciences programs. With this contribution, they will be able to help provide students and faculty with the means to succeed. I'd like to congratulate Dr. Solis and Laredo College on receiving this award."

All higher education institutions that were considered went through a comprehensive evaluation process in order to qualify as one of the selected recipients of these educational funds. Laredo College demonstrated innovation, quality education, adaptability, affordability and impactful student life. From a wide pool of possible candidates to receive this funding, Laredo College was selected among the top contenders. The top higher education institutions were also interviewed by TikTok to select the ten recipients.



"Healthcare workers are the heroes of the global pandemic, and deserving heroes within the TikTok community. The TikTok Health Heroes Relief Fund was created to support their efforts and we are honored to be able to continue our commitment to the healthcare community," said Belinda Frazier, Head of Culture and Diversity at TikTok North America.

Among the ten awardees, LC was the only community college to be selected nationwide and the only higher education institution in Texas to secure the million-dollar gift.

Part of the funds will be utilized for scholarships and recruitment costs to support current and prospective students in the health sciences fields. Students who reside in Webb, Dimmit, La Salle, Starr and Zapata counties can benefit from these funds should they meet program qualifications.

The remaining sum will be geared toward funding current and future health sciences programs, faculty and academic support. Academic support will be provided to students and faculty in the form of new equipment, software, training and any other functions that will aid in the fulfillment of the college's mission.

Laredo College will continue to focus on its mission to transform students' lives through innovative educational programs and services, continue its dynamic partnerships, and aspire and cultivate advanced teaching methods. Once more, through this award, LC has achieved institutional excellence and will continue to aid students in the achievement of their educational goals by implementing collaborative pathways that enhance student learning.

Helping Hands Project raises \$3,700 for LC students

Laredo College is feeling the generous spirit and making the holiday season jollier for Palominos. The Laredo College Trading Station and the Laredo College Alumni & Friends Association joined forces for the Helping Hands Project, an initiative conceived to help out students in need.

Setting the example and kicking off the giving streak, the Laredo College Alumni & Friends Association donated \$1,000 directly to the Trading Station to assist them in immediately replenishing their food supply. This generous donation is separate from the total amount raised.

Through the contributions of members of our community, the Helping Hands Project logged \$2,700 in donations for students. The funds came primarily from a Facebook fundraiser organized by the LC Alumni & Friends Association. Additionally, the association matched the first \$1,000 in donations, bringing the total to an impressive \$3,700, and surpassing the \$3,000 donation goal in only one week.

Laredo College President Dr. Ricardo J. Solis thanked the association for their commitment to making a difference in the lives of students and embodying the meaning of Palominos supporting Palominos.

"Our college family and international Palomino community once again came through for our students," Dr. Solis said. "We are in awe of their continuous generosity. It is a testament to the special place Laredo College holds in the hearts of so many people. Thanks to this great network of friends and community partners, many of our students facing



difficult financial times will be able to buy food and other necessities this holiday season."

All the funds raised through this initiative will go directly to LC students in the form of gift cards for grocery stores like Walmart or H-E-B. Students will be able to purchase food, clothing, toiletries or any necessities. A total of 74 students will receive this aid.

Due to the pandemic, the Trading Station is providing services through its free online store, which can be found at <https://www.laredo.edu/cms/TSS>. Once students complete their order, the Office of Student Life will reach out to them to schedule an appointment for pick-up.

The Trading Station accepts donations year-round. Due to the pandemic, only monetary donations are being accepted at the time through the Laredo College Alumni & Friends Association Facebook page or by mailing a check. Checks can be made out to Laredo College c/o Trading Station (Office of Student Life) and can be mailed to West End Washington St., Box 170 in Laredo, TX 78040. For more information, students can email studentlife@laredo.edu or call (956) 721-5179.

\$1.1 million dollars awarded to Laredo College

The Laredo College Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Department was granted \$1.1 million dollars that will fund English as a Second Language (ESL) and High School Equivalency (GED) instruction. Additionally, workforce skills scholarships are available, which pay for tuition, equipment, uniforms, instructional material and testing.

"When individuals have the power to obtain an education that leads to sustainable employment, they not only change their lives, they also impact their communities. It is important for our institution to provide people with the necessary tools

to reach their educational goals," Laredo College President Ricardo J. Solis said. "Laredo College works tirelessly to obtain the necessary funds to allow citizens to develop their skills or acquire new ones."

Additional programs such as Civics, Digital Literacy, Financial Literacy and Family Literacy are also funded through this grant.

These funds will provide over 1,000 prospective students the opportunity to participate in this program. Last semester, 500 students from Webb, Jim Hogg and Zapata counties were able to take advantage of this opportunity. Participants

were offered flexible morning or evening schedules, as well as virtual course options to adhere to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

"Adult literacy is of the utmost importance to Laredo College. Literacy not only enriches an individual's life, but creates opportunities for people to develop skills that will help them provide for themselves and their families," Dean of Community Education Sandra Cortez said. "These programs are designed for participants to begin a career pathway, learn a skill and continue on their educational or workforce

pathway."

Registration for these courses is underway. Classes will be offered in a virtual environment. New certifications that are available for the upcoming sessions are Certified Medical Administrative Assistant, Certified Office Manager and Small Business Management - Entrepreneurship.

To qualify for these programs, prospective students must be at least 16 years old, lack a high school diploma, function below the high school level or be unable to speak, read or write the English language.

